



POLICY AND RESOURCES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD AT PENALLTA HOUSE, YSTRAD MYNACH ON TUESDAY, 2ND OCTOBER 2012 AT 5.00 P.M.

PRESENT:

Councillor H.W. David - Chairman
Councillor Mrs J. Summers - Vice-Chairman

Councillors:

L. Binding, D.G. Carter, C.J. Cuss, Mrs. D. Ellis, J.E. Fussell, C. Hawker, Ms. J.G. Jones,
G. Kirby, A. Lewis, S. Morgan, R. Saralis

Also Present:

Cabinet Member: Councillor C. Forehead (Human Resources and Governance/Business
Manager)

Together with:

N. Barnett (Deputy Chief Executive), P.S. Evans (Head of Information, Communications and
Technology), G. Hardacre (Head of Human Resources and Organisation Development),
C. Jones (Head of Performance and Property), E. Lucas (Head of Procurement), D. Perkins
(Head of Legal and Governance), N. Scammell (Head of Corporate Finance), K. Williams
(Private Sector Housing Manager), J. Jones (Democratic Services Manager), R.J. Thomas
(Committee Services Officer)

APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors C.P. Mann, D. Rees and J. Taylor

1. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest made at the beginning or during the meeting.

2. MINUTES

RESOLVED that the minutes of the last meeting held on 31st July 2012 (minute nos.
1 - 10, on page nos. 1 - 4) be approved as a correct record and signed by the
Chairman.

3. CALL-IN PROCEDURE

There were no matters referred to the Scrutiny Committee in accordance with the call-in procedure.

4. CABINET REPORTS

The Cabinet reports listed on the agenda had not been requested to be brought forward for review at the meeting.

5. REPORT OF THE CABINET MEMBER

Councillor Mrs C. Forehead, Cabinet Member for Human Resources and Governance/ Business Manager, gave a verbal report to Members and made reference to the implementation of *'The Living Wage'* for employees of CCBC with effect from Monday, 1st October 2012.

She also highlighted the positive successes the Authority has had with the *'Caerphilly Passport Programme'*, providing work based placements and training opportunities for young people of the Borough. The Council has also been successful in a bid to Welsh Government (£370k) as part of the European Social Fund that will help to further develop the programme.

In addition, the Authority has identified funding from Job Centre Plus and through Jobs Growth Wales to further build the programme over the next two years. Approval from Job Centre Plus and Welsh Government is currently outstanding.

Members thanked the Cabinet Member for her presentation.

REPORTS OF OFFICERS

Consideration was given to the following reports.

6. LAND AT OAKFIELD STREET, LLANBRADACH

The report sought Members recommendation to Cabinet for the Council, as part of a comprehensive regeneration programme, to make a Compulsory Purchase Order in respect of land adjacent to 27 Oakfield Street, Llanbradach and to subsequently sell this land to United Welsh Housing Association (UWHA) to facilitate its development of 4 properties. In addition, unkempt land directly alongside this site to be subject to a Compulsory Purchase Order, to extend the existing development proposals to facilitate 2 extra units of accommodation. Members were asked to note that the ownership of this additional piece of land is unknown and consequently purchase by agreement is not possible.

Members discussed the report and officers responded to general questions. Officers confirmed the following amendments to the report:

- i) that the start of paragraph 4.4 should read, "The site of No's 29-35 (odds) ..."
- ii) that the date of the Acquisition of Land Act as contained within paragraph 9.2 should be dated 1981.

The Scrutiny Committee considered the report and recommended to Cabinet that, for the reasons contained therein:-

- (a) in pursuance of the powers contained within Section 226(1)(a) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and all other enabling powers, a Compulsory Purchase

Order relating to the area of land identified on the plan displayed at the meeting, to be known as the Caerphilly County Borough Council (Llanbradach Renewal Area) Compulsory Purchase Order 2012, be made and sealed by the Council and that notice thereof be given and published and that the same be submitted to the Welsh Government for confirmation.

- (b) in pursuance of the powers contained in Section 6(4) of the Acquisition of Land Act 1981 and all other enabling powers, all documents required or authorised to be served in respect of land in unknown ownership be served under the Act by leaving a copy of any such document on or near the land.
- (c) once the Order is confirmed by the Welsh Government, the area of land be sold to United Welsh Housing Association to facilitate its development as outlined within the Scrutiny Committee report.

7. CORPORATE PROCUREMENT

The report and accompanying presentation advised Members of the recent procurement reviews commissioned by the Welsh Government and provided details of the current procurement policies and practices within Caerphilly County Borough Council.

It was confirmed that over the past five years CCBC has substantially invested in the procurement function and now operates a mature operating model with embedded eProcurement, with robust stand-alone systems and standardised working practices. It does however, have a vested interest in the future of collaborative eProcurement in Wales and will benefit from the continuation of centrally managed and funded/subsidised Welsh Government provision.

In the coming months, the Authority will need to consider issues relating to how procurement in Wales, and Caerphilly, is organised and commissioned in the future. However, it is unclear at this stage how the project will progress and what costs are likely to befall user organisations.

Members thanked the officer for the informative report and a full discussion ensued with officers responding to general questions. In particular, clarification was given as to how the proposed National Procurement Service (NPS) could affect the Welsh Housing Quality Standard (WHQS), and what benefits a NPS could bring to the Authority.

Members requested a further report be brought before the Scrutiny Committee once further information is available. Officers advised that a report would be forthcoming, before the end of the year, prior to consideration by Cabinet.

The Scrutiny Committee noted the contents of the report and the recommendations of the various procurement reviews undertaken by Welsh Government during the last twelve months.

8. REVIEW OF FINANCIAL REGULATIONS

The report sought consultation with Members as part of the consultation process required to update the Authority's Financial Regulations. The Financial Regulations play a fundamental role in respect of Corporate Governance and were last updated in November 2006.

The Head of Corporate Finance highlighted the key amendments and confirmed the ongoing consultation arrangements. Members were informed that the revised Financial Regulations would be presented to full Council for approval in the new year.

The Scrutiny Committee considered the report and agreed to forward any comments on the revisions to the Head of Corporate Finance, if appropriate.

9. TREASURY MANAGEMENT AND CAPITAL FINANCING PRUDENTIAL INDICATORS OUTTURN REPORT FOR 2011/12

The report gave Members details of Treasury Management (TM) activities and Capital Financing, together with the related Prudential Indicators for 2011/12. For the benefit of newly elected Members, the Head of Corporate Finance also gave a brief summary of the Council's TM practices and the challenges faced by the Authority.

Members discussed the report and sought additional information regarding investment management and the monitoring of risk with the aid of specialist advisors, Sector Treasury Services and Arlingclose.

The Head of Corporate Finance advised Members that a review of current TM practices could be undertaken, should they consider that the Council was being too risk adverse, and recommended that a representative of Arlingclose be invited to give the Scrutiny Committee a presentation. Members welcomed this suggestion.

The Scrutiny Committee noted the contents of the report.

10. REQUESTS FOR AN ITEM TO BE INCLUDED ON THE NEXT AVAILABLE AGENDA

A further update was given to Councillor L. Binding relating to the report he had requested on the support given to providers and the strategic direction adopted by the Council for the roll out of broadband throughout the county borough. It was agreed that in the interim, a BT representative would be asked to give a short presentation to the Scrutiny Committee regarding available broadband speeds.

Councillor Ms. J. Jones requested a Forward Work Programme report to be prepared for consideration at future meetings of the Scrutiny Committee.

11. INFORMATION ITEMS

The following reports were received and noted without discussion:

- (1) Budget Monitoring 2012/13 - Corporate Services and Miscellaneous Finance;
- (2) Quarterly Update on Progress of Service Level Agreements Held by the Policy Unit with Voluntary Organisations in the Borough;
- (3) Freedom of Information / Environmental Information / Data Protection Requests
1st January 2012 – 30th June 2012;
- (4) Minutes of the Housing Task Group (Welsh Quality Housing Standard) Meeting held on 12th September 2012.

The meeting closed at 6.15 p.m.

Approved as a correct record, and subject to any amendments or corrections agreed and recorded in the minutes of the meeting held on 13th November 2012, they were signed by the Chairman.

CHAIRMAN